

A Coppy of a LETTER

Sent by the *Burgh-Masters* and *Council*

OF

AMSTERDAM,

To the rest of the CITY's that have their Session

IN THE

ASSEMBLY of the STATES

OF

Holland and West-Frezland.

GENTLEMEN,

WE have Understood by the Report of Our *DEPUTIES* that Assisted in Our States-Provincial, the 16th *Disse*, with great amazement, How that the same Day, by Order only of the *Pentionaries* of Holland, without the usual putting it to the Question, that the doors of the said Assembly were commanded to be shut, as also the ante-Chamber belonging to the States-Provincial, with an injunction that no Man might be suffered to go out; and that at the desire of the Prince of Orange, Two of our *Deputies*, the *Heer Gerard Hoof* one of the Council of this City, and the *Heer Hap* our *Pentionary*, left their Seats and went into the said ante-Chamber, for that it was pretended that this Affair did concern them in particular as well as others: After which, the Prince of Orange laid before the States-Provincial, That the Marquis *D'Grana* having intercepted several Letters from the *French* Ambassador at the *Hague* to the King his Master, bearing date the 9th of *January* last, which he had sent to him; containing (as 'tis said) a circumstantial relation of some private correspondence betwixt the said Ambassador and us; of which the said Prince of Orange thought himself obliged to give them the said States an account thereof, and that accordingly the said Letters were read in the Assembly of the States by the said *Pentionaries* of *Holland*; and that the said Prince of Orange did suppose that the Two before-named our *Deputies*, were much concerned in this Correspondency, and did not know whether they had Orders so to do or not. This matter being under debate, our Two *Deputies*, which before had quitted their places, came in and took possession thereof again, and endeavours were used to cause them to depart into the ante-Chamber again; but our aforesaid *Deputies* did not look upon themselves as obliged to do what they required, especially for that they had

done nothing but by Vertue of Order; However the States-Provincial thought good that Copies of the said Letters should be sent to the Knights, Gentlemen, *Burghermasters* and Common-Councils of the respective Cities, to have their Advice what was most convenient to be done concerning this Affair, which fills us with no small amazement that a beginning should be made of a Criminal Process against so just and upright Members of the States, notwithstanding their earnest opposition, and they proffered to purge themselves against all that could be laid to their charge, drawn from the aforesaid Letters by erroneous constructions: Notwithstanding all which, our Papers, and those of our *Pentionaries*, were Sealed up by Two of the Members of the States, as also by the Secretary *Beaumont*, and laid aside till after a Communication of the aforesaid Letters to their Principles, it should be concluded whether the said Paper should be Examined or no. When We begin to reflect on the one side, That the Charge of an Unlawful Correspondency betwixt the *French* Ambassador and us, comes simply, and only to appear out of the aforesaid intercepted Letters to the King his Master, and so falling into the hands of a Foreign Minister, and only as it agrees with his apprehensions and constructions, the Letters being in Cyphers, which we know not whether they be truly uncyphered and have their true sense or no; and reflecting on the other side, that this is the Foundation of all these severe Proceedings, as first, In the locking of the Doors of the Assembly of the States Provincial in an unusual manner, and that by the Order only of the *Pentionary* of *Holland*, and then in their severe handling of our aforesaid two *Deputies*, who are not so much as mentioned in the Letters intercepted by the Marquis *D'Grana*, and who not only immediately proffered to move, as the truth is, not so much as

to have spoken with the said French Ambassador, but by our Order; but also to disprove what was most abusively laid to their Charge by the Petitionaries of *Holland*, as that they the same day that the said Letters were sent away for *France* by the French Ambassador, had not been at his house, making it plainly appear, the one that he was indisposed, and the other, that, that day he had not been out of his Lodgings at the *Hague*.

We do exceedingly wonder, that notwithstanding all this, it should be thought good to seal up our Papers, and to proceed with such Extravagancies precipitating such Reports both within and without this Country, as tends to the diminishing and dishonouring of this City, against the illiterate Solicitations of our Deputies: That the said Letters might be read again in their hearing, they being in the Anti-chamber while they were read before the States Provincial, promising to make a Categorical Answer to the same, which then without question, they would have forborn sealing up our Papers, and their Innocency appearing, they would have desisted from those so strange proceedings; or at least would have shewed so much Wisdom and Discretion, as not to have sent away a Charge to all the Councils and Cities, until they had heard what could be said in our Defence.

We desire also your Honors to consider how much we are concerned for the security of our Deputies in Respect to their Persons, as also of their Papers, according to the Justice of this Country, and the Resolutions relating to that Affair; for which Reasons we cannot forbear but be highly concerned, and be heartily sorry, and the more when we consider that those Proceedings against such Upright and Faithful Members of the State, are not only against all Forms of Justice and Prudence, but also against the Honor, Freedom, and Security, that belongs to the Members Composing that Assembly. And then considering what ill Consequences may be the Effects, that the aforesaid Charge is only drawn out of Intercepted Letters from the Ambassador of *France* to the King his Master. And we cannot Apprehend but with great sorrow and trouble of mind, the great Mischiefs and Difficulties that might fall upon this State, by those Commotions that may be raised within us by such Scandals as these are, and at a time wherein all the Members ought to be equally Zealous by the Extending and Uniting of their Understandings with all the care imaginable, to conclude what may be good for Christendome in general, and for this State in particular, and for the preventing of a dangerous War; concerning which, we can Call God for our Witness, that all our Conducts and Advices have tended to the same purpose. There is nothing troubles us less, as the making our Innocency appear to the aforesaid Charge, and we shall make the same plainly appear to your Honors, when the said Letters of the said French Ambassador shall come to our hands; And in the mean time we desire your Honors for your own advantage to consider those mischievous Consequences that may attend the Assembly of your Honors and every Member thereof, if any Resolution should be taken not

founded upon good Reason, Order, and Polity. And therefore that you would be pleased for to stay for our Information after we have received the Letters from the said Ambassador, before that you would come to any Resolution to our prejudice, or to the prejudice of the Rights of this Country, and of every Member thereof in particular; we assuring you that we will not be wanting on our parts in any thing relating to this Affair. — But, before we conclude this Matter, we cannot pass by without great admiration, that it appears to us by the Advices from several Members of the States, that the Sealing of the Papers of the *Pier Van Buren* Petitionary in particular ought not to have been done, for that the said Petitionary from time to time received Letters from the *Pier Van Buren*, present *Bürgermeister* of this City, for it cannot be imagined, neither is there any reason of Suspicion of any Crime or Misdemeanour, that a present *Bürgermeister* should Write to a Minister in the *Hague*, And that in all Justice a Man ought to be lookt upon a very Criminal, before that at a Correspondency with him should be the Cause of seizing of Papers in the Possession of any Man; especially in the Hands of Deputies at their places Assigned. This Letter being ended, there is come to our Hands a Copy of the aforesaid Intercepted Letters from the French Ambassador, which we cannot pass over without some suddain Remarks.

As first, That it seems to be but an Extract of a Letter and not the whole, in regard there is not only Words left out, but Words put in, which could not be well omitted to make up the Sense: As also in the said Extract, there was left a great many Variances, which plainly shews, That the *Marquis d'Oran* hath not sent the full Contents of the said Letter. And therefore, before a true Judgment be Conformd of this Affair, or that we should give a thorow satisfaction in the Thing demanded; it must be known, That the Principal Contents of the said Letters were, That we have done our Endeavours to make known to the States, and to bring before them as a Matter of Deliberation, what the said Ambassador of *France* made known to us in particular, and what we made as the first overture in *December*, which was Communicated to our Deputies, and immediately also to the Petitionary of *Holland*, and several other of the Members. And in regard it tended to no other End, then to move the *Spaniards* to a speedy Accommodation of their Differences with *France*, for the security of the *Spanish Netherlands*, and for the quenching that Fire of War which was already broken into a Flame, which never appeared to us to be otherwise then serviceable and acceptable into the Members of the States, that it had given them Occasion to Deliberate on that Affair. Other Matters contained in the Letter, are Affairs without our Knowledge.

As for our selves, we have been so far from holding any particular Correspondency in making any Engagements or Promises to the said Ambassador of *France*, that our Care and Circumspection will appear to be such, that it were heartily to be wished, that the like were observed by all those that bare a part in our Government.